Number II

PUBLICATIONS

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OF THE

COLONIAL DAMES

OF AMERICA

1906

"HEMPFIELD"

The Wright homestead. Built in 1726.

Publications

of the

Pennsylvania Society

of the

Colonial Dames

of America

No. II

Edited by

The Committee on Research

Committee on Historical Research

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Susanna Wright

1697-1784

Among a collection of letters and papers, preserved at Stenton by the Logan family, through several generations, is the following account of Susanna Wright, which is printed here from the beautiful manuscript of Deborah Norris Logan, written almost a hundred years ago, in the library, at Stenton, a favorite room of Mrs. Logan's. In her diary she says: "I passed the afternoon in the library, which is my most agreeable apartment in summer, where I am quiet and retired from noise and interruption, cool, and shaded in the most delicious manner by the fine old trees that surround the venerable dwelling, the glycene and ivy forming the most beautiful festoons around the southern windows."

The charm of peaceful serenity still clings to the spot, the vines still climb about the southern windows, and many valuable documents written by Deborah Logan in that room are still preserved; the clear decided characters still easy to read, although the paper is worn and yellowed with time. Two generations earlier, in this same library, Susanna Wright, always a favorite guest of James Logan, probably spent many an hour in congenial talk with her "book loving" host. This memoir was written with a purpose, as we see, and printed in a local periodical, never widely circulated, and long since out of print.

"As it appears to me to be a duty which the living owe to each other as well as to the dead, to rescue merit from descending into oblivion, I have endeavored to trace the following notices of a Lady, who tho well known & generally esteemed by the most eminent characters in this state whilst she lived, yet nothing I believe, respecting her has ever appeared in Print. What I now mean to offer is from recollection alone, but my opportunities for information were such as to enable me to give those recollections with certainty.

"Susanna Wright, was the daughter of John Wright, Esq. a very intelligent and upright man and one of the first settlers in Lancaster County. She came over with her Parents from near Warrington in Great Britain in 1714 being then about 17 years of age. She had received a good education, and having an excellent understanding, she assiduously cultivated her fine talents, notwithstanding the disadvantages of her situation; her Parents first settled at Chester, but a short time afterwards removed to the banks of the Susquehanna, then a most remote frontier settlement, in ye midst of Indians, subject to all the inconveniences, labours, privations, & dangers, of an infant establishment; here she exerted herself continually for the good of her family and the benefit of her neighbours.

"She never married, but after the death of her Father became the head of her own family, who looked up to her for advice and direction as to a Parent, for her heart was replete with every kind affection and with all the social virtues. She was well acquainted with Books, had an excellent memory as well as a most clear and comprehensive judgment, she spoke and wrote the French language with great ease and fluency, she had also a knowledge of Latin,

and could read Italian, and had made considerable attainment in many of the sciences. Her letters written to her friends were deservedly esteemed for their ingenuity, she corresponded on subjects of Literature with James Logan, Isaac Norris and many other celebrated characters of that period.

"So great was the esteem in which she was held by her neighbors for integrity and judgement, that disputes of considerable interest were frequently left to her sole arbitration, by the parties concerned. Her advice was often desired on occasions of importance respecting the settlements of estates, and she was also resorted to as a Physician by her neighbours.

"The care and management of a large family, & of a profitable establishment devolved upon her, and she appeared to be so constantly occupied with the employments usual to her sex and station, that it was wonderful how she found time for that acquaintance with polite literature which her conversation displayed, when she met with persons capable of appreciating it.

"She took great delight in domestic manufactures, and had constantly much of it produced in her own family; she, for many years attended to the rearing of silk worms, and with the silk, which she reeled, & prepared herself made many articles both of beauty & usefulness, dying the silk of various colours, & at one time had upwards of sixty yards of most excellent mantua, of her own raising.

"She sometimes amused herself with her Pencil and with little works of fancy, but the productions of her pen were greatly and deservedly admired whilst she lived and would abundantly satisfy the world of her merit could they be produced, but she wrote not for fame, she never kept copies

and it is to be feared but little can be now recovered. Her character appears to have been without vanity, & above affectation.

"I had the pleasure when very young of seeing her and can remember something of the vivacity and spirit of her conversation, which I have since heard some of the best judges of such merit, affirm, they had seldom known to be equalled.

"She lived to be upwards of 80 preserving her senses & faculties. She had been educated in the Religious society of Friends, and died a most humble, sincere, christian.

"She was small in person, & had never been handsome but had a very penetrating, sensible countenance, and was truly polite & courteous in her address & behaviour."

Between the lines of this record of one remarkable woman, written by another, and both distinguished in the early annals of Pennsylvania, we catch a glimpse of a charming little Quaker lady, who ruled in her community by virtue of many a sovereign remedy and a very unusual knowledge of legal authorities during a long happy life, busied in domestic cares and family responsibilities, but finding always keen enjoyment in intellectual pursuits. Her father, John Wright, was many times elected to the General Assembly, and knew well all the prominent men of his day. His homestead, on the banks of the Susquehanna, was known by the appropriately pretty name of Hempfield, and from there, many of Susanna's letters to Franklin, Logan, Norris, Thomson and others were dated, but unfortunately very few of them have been saved. The following letters were found in an old garret, some years ago, at Hempfield, by some young descendants of John Wright, and are now printed for the first time:

James Logan to Susanna Wright:

Philadia 27th 10th 1718.

Dear Susannah:

I must acquaint thee both in my wife's behalf and my own that we were very much troubled that we were not favored with more of thy company when so * * * * * * * * * * * in so near a neighborhood, nor were we y * * * * * * * * * clear of blame in not visiting thee, but as we were settled in a house so near thee and thou happily mistress of thy own time, the first might have been most Suitable. Tho' I am not Master of a Grammar of my own I have Sent thee a borrowed one and my own dictionary, also a small french piece, that, if thou couldst read freely, would I believe yield thee some pleasure. I doubt not but capacity and the application thou threatens will afford it to thee. I shall be pleased to Serve thee in what I can being

Thy sincere ffriend

J. Logan.

My wife affectionately salutes thee.

To Susannah Wright,
near
Chester.

The bearer by whom this was designed disappointed us.

PHILADIA 18" June, 1728.

Dear Susy

I thank thee very heartily for thy last kind lines by the Return of some of our Governors Company. My obstinate Lameness and disability that gives but a very slender prospect of any recovery, this Decline of Strength & Life and from so slight a cause really very discouraging yet 'tis much easier to me than it might prove to many others, for I am not without hopes, that I may rub through the short remainder of my stage, without any very great uneasiness, tho' I should never more be able to use my Limb for the purpose it was designed for, and I hope also without being reduced to any great straits for the want of it. It is however my Lott & Prudence advises to make the best of it the less I can Serve or Divert myself abroad the more I may amuse myself at home with entertainmts that are no way contemptible. My wife desires thee to send her 30 lbs. of that fine flax she hears you have to dispose of. If you have not so much left See if Andrew Corniss has it.

I have some new pieces from England, one especially, from—of the Traité du Beau wch would please thee, but as divers desire to be obliged with such pieces & that particularly, I cannot send it for some time and indeed I am discouraged by such things being buried with thee when in thy hands. * Woollaston has been long & often enquired for by those I long since promised him to. Pray think of him & me by the next safe opportunity. I am with kind love to thy self, father, Saml & his with ye rest of yr family,

Thy affectionate ffriend

J. LOGAN.

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* The Religion of Nature Delineated. By William Wollaston, 1728.

Extract of a letter, dated Philada., 24th, Nov., 1728:

Tho' thy last with thy short flight at Poetry once more, requires my acknowledgement, yet I would not give thee one line were it not that I wish barely to tell thee that I had thy promise to visit us this fall, that I find thy father desires it, and therefore that as I am sure it is necessary for thee I shall take no excuse whatsoever, downright sickness excepted, but shall interpret all others that can be offer'd as a direct declaration that thou art absolutely determined to renounce for Hempfield all the rest of the World, and amongst others, one who has ever since his acquaintance with thee been most strongly inclined to shew himself

thy sincere and affectionate frd

J. Logan.

I was in hopes what I said of some Books being confined to idleness at Chester when they are much wanted here would have procured them. My Daughter is hard at her french under a Master & has occasion for fontanelle & fenelon or Arb'p Cambray. Pray let others learn also. Where is Vaugelas?

J. Logan.

STENTON* 19th 10th 1735.

My friend Susie

This afternoon I recvd thy obliging lettr of ye 7th inst together with another kind one of ye 9th from S. Blunston wch I have just answered, and now must Say Something to thine which having no Rhimes in it but my own or at most but half-one more may be somewhat the easier dispatched. I need not now tell thee I suppose how very often and very much I have with regret considered the uneasiness of thy Circumstances and Situation there: yet to be very free with thee I really think all thou hast said on that head is not a sufficient apology for a Silence if I mistake not of 4 months at least. however as it is in my power to make up its deficiency forever by forgiving all the rest I shall for this time take it for paymt.

I know not what Construction to put on ye conduct of that man in Maryland but either that he is resolved to bully and frighten us wch I hope will not be in his power, or that he is mad with what is So. But I hope a few months will at least give us quiet by an Injunction from the Chancery, which with any proper application I can't think they will fail of obtaining nor doe I at all doubt but all due measures will be taken for it.

As to thy notion of the Author of the Distichs I must leave thee to ye enjoymt of thy own, having sufficiently acquitted myself on that head in ye print.

It had run in my head thou hadst seen the rough draught of ye 2 first books I had by me for about 25 years before it ever entered my thoughts again to finish or take any further notice of them, but if I mistake not in the Lettr

* Stenton, James Logan's country seat, was built in 1728.

wrote with ye Print from Philada I gave thee a particular ansr how they happen'd to be compleated. I may however hint this farther that if thou really hast a copy of any number of them as first Seen here, thou wilt on comparing them I believe find them somewhat improved.

I really know not what to say to thee about Books. I Suppose thou knows I very rarely buy an English one and as rarely french, and thou hast seen all I had about 2 years Since. I am forced indeed if I want one in other Language to buy or goe without them, but those others when I can I borrow my self and while thou hast Morery's* (or Collier's) & Chambers' great Dictionaries by thee wch contain the Substance of all History, Geography & Philosophy I cannot imagine unless thy memory is so prodigious as to retain all thou hast once read, how thou canst be so greatly at a loss: however I have got one new history that I lent in town before I had ever read 2 leaves in it my self wch when W. Allen has done with it I shall endeavor to get to thee if another who also has the promise of it does not prevent it. Yet this would be unreasonable for there is no good book I should send there but what I would naturally expect (nor could I be agst it) should be twice read over, that is by 2 persons, before it is returned, and then when must I ever see a folio again? not in my life who want not above 10 months of entring my grand climactery. But my paper bids me have done my ———— & therefore with kind Love to thy Self, father &c I end this from

Thy affectionate frd

J. Logan.

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* Le Grand Dictionnaire Historique ou le Mélange curieux de l'histoire sacrée et profane. Par Louis Moréri. 4 vols. Amsterdam, 1717.

These letters prove the intimacy of the friendship between Susannah and her learned friend whose anxiety to get back the books he had lent is not unreasonable. That his remarks on the subject had due effect is proved by the Catalogue of the Loganian Library bequeathed to the City of Philadelphia by its founder in 1751.

A little note to Sarah Logan has by chance been preserved, which shows another link in this chain of friendship:

Dear Sarah

I wrote thee a nice french letter yesterday on purpose to send our Martha's but I have mislaid or Lost it. it was to assure thee unless thee wrote to mee in the same Language the was not to expect anny thing of this kind farther from

thy S. W.

(Sus. Wright.)

(Written to Sarah, eldest daughter of James Logan, who married Isaac Norris in 1739.)

In 1745 Samuel Blunston one of these pioneers a near neighbour and if rumour can be trusted in such delicate matters a suitor more than once refused by Miss Wright died leaving as his will reads "to my valued friend Susanna Wright a life interest in my lands at this place" Susannah with her brother James Wright and his family moved to the Blunston Mansion soon after. The house was built in 1726 of brick brought from England. It was originally of two stories with dormer windows. A small room opening from the dining room on the ground floor was used by Samuel Blunston as a Prothonotary's

Office, and, after his death, by Susanna Wright who sat by the window at stated hours every week to receive the people from the country round, who came to her for prescriptions and advice. During the Indian Wars of 1755-64, the settlers on the banks of the Susquehanna were often in a perilous position, and from time to time they took refuge at Wright's Ferry, where the principal houses were put in a state of defense.

On the fly leaf of an old account book now in possession of Mr. Samuel Wright, of Columbia, is the following note of the first settlement in Lancaster County.

A Journal of Our Removal
from Chester & Darby to Conestogo
In Order to Begin a Settlement
at Shawanah Town
on Susquehanna
upon 12th. Day of September 1726.
Company

Jno. Wright	Samuel Blunston
H. Scarlet	L. Ryley
Jno Devel	Prince & Indian
Negro Peter	Negro Sam

"John Wright was born in the year 1667, in Lancashire, England, of religious and reputable parents, who were among the early professors of the doctrines held by the people called Quakers, and lived and died highly esteemed members of that community. He was educated with a view to the practice of physic, but he declined pursuing it, and entered into trade until the year 1714, when he removed, with his

family, into Pennsylvania, well recommended by certificate from his friends, the Quakers, in that part of England, both as to his moral character and as a preacher in the society, with whom they had for many years lived in strict amity.

"Soon after his settlement in the province, his principles and conduct recommending him to the notice of the public, he was a Representative to the General Assembly, for Chester County, and many years also for Lancaster County. In his station as a Judge for the last county, he was noted for a prompt, honest plainness and candour, and an inflexible integrity.

"He continued to attend the Assemblies till broken health and an advanced age rendered such attendance difficult, and sometimes impracticable, although the people among whom he lived, from a long experience of his services and regard to him, would not be prevailed on by himself or his family to name another in his stead, for that station, but continued to return his name until he died, in 1751."

(Extract from the History of Pennsylvania by Robert Proud, 1797.)

John Wright to Susanna Wright:

PHILA. 20th. of 6 mo. 1747.

Dear Susie;

I have thyne by post, am sorry to hear of the illness of our neighborhood and specially of James's and Betty Hyde's family. This citty is very sickly. I know not when we shall depart, hope to get most done this week,—I'le come home as soon as done. I continue hearty & well, but much aflickted with my Thumb which is exceedingly painful. I have spoak to John Kinsey and he allows Jno. Ross to sell his Boy, paying the charges. The rest is kind love to you all,

Thy Lo, Father

JNO. WRIGHT.

Charles Norris, father of Deborah Norris, who afterwards married George Logan of Stenton; to James Wright, brother of Susanna.

PHILA., August 17, 1748.

Though I have been well enough to scrawl a letter for some time past yet I have not given myself the pleasure of renewing my tenders of Esteem as I have been chiefly out of town.

I was pleased to see thy father look so well once more with us tho I doubt not this journey of his has been much against the Consent of his Children as he is now in so advanced an Age-He says now he shall be willing after this to stay at home. I have not had an opportunity of seeing him so often as I could wish as he lodges at Joshia Crosbys .....as it is ye very skirts of the Town, tho I believe he has a very agreeable and Commodious Lodging as he is nigh the House and in an Airey part of the Town, the two * Old Gentlemen talk Eat and Ride in ye Chariot very pleasantly and Coazey.

* Norris, the councillor, and John Wright who died in 1751.

There are not many dates in the old note book, but the following items suggest a much later period, when a degree of comfortable living had been reached:

Recipes from Old Account Book of Susanna Wright.

"The snuff of a candle cures Bleeding at the nose Rub'd to a powder & snuff'd up the nose."

A Sweet meat Pudding.

Put a thin Puff Paste on the bottom of your dish Then have of candy'd Orange and Lemon peel & citron of each an ounce Slice thin throw in the bottom of your dish on the paste-Then beat 8 yolks of eggs and whites and mix ½ lb. of Sugar and ¼ Pound of melted butter. Beat all well together till your arms ache so you can beat it no longer and when your oven is ready Pour it on your Sweet meats in the dish an hour or less will bake it.

To make Carrot Pudding.

Take raw carrots and scrape them clean grate them with a grater without a back. To half a Pound of carrot take a Pound of grated bread, a nutmeg, a little cinnamon, a very little salt, half a Pound of sugar and half a Pint of Sack. 8 eggs a Pound of butter melted and as much cream as will mix it well together-Stir it and beat it well up & Put it in a dish to bake. Put Puff-paste at the bottom of your dish.

To Stew Pigeons.

Season your Pigeons with Pepper, Salt, cloves, mace & some Sweet herbs, wrap this seasoning up in a Bit of Batter and Put it in their bellies, tye up the necks and vent and half roast them Then Put them in a Stew pan with a quart of good gravy a little white wine some Pickled mushrooms, adde Pepper then a few blades of mace a bit of lemon Peel a bunch of sweet herbs a bit of an onion some oyster pickle, when they are done take them out and season the sauce with butter and yolks of eggs.

This receit is to make fritters.

Take half a Pint of thick cream Put to it 4 eggs well beaten a little brandy some nutmeg and ginger make this into a thick batter with flour golden Pippins Par'd and cut in thin slices dip them in the Batter and fry them in lard

A Baked Tansy.

Take 20 eggs but 8 whites beat them very well and strain them into a quart of thick cream one nutmeg and 3 Naples Biscuits grate it, as much juice of Spinage with a Sprig or two of tansy as will make it of a beautiful grass green Sweeten it to your taste, then butter your dish and set it in the oven no hotter than for custards watch it as soon as 'tis done take it out and turn it on a Dish scrape sugar and squeeze orange upon it, garnish with orange and Lemon. Serve it up with great nicety.

From Chas. Norris to James Wright and Susanna Wright, June 3, 1756:

. . . since then I have had an oppo of casting my eye over the negociations of Peace between our ambassadors Duke of Newcastle etc. and the Delawares and Shawnees which are that all of those nations which went over to the ffrench on the Ohio are heartily sorry for the wickedness they have committed and Earnestly Request the King to forgive them and they give the strongest assurances of cercumspection and unfeigned Pacific Inclination toward the english and promise never more to be drawn into the like . . . that they have now pulled up the Largest Tree in the Woods and under the Roots thereof have dugg a very Deep hole wherein they have now buried the Hatchet and then Covered It and over the same replanted the Tree so that neithr their nor our Children shall ever find it any more.

That their Eyes have Run with Tears without measure but now are cleaning up, by the friendly help of their brothers the English who have kindly wiped them away in a good measure, so that there is the greatest liklihood of an Established peace once more Concluded between them and us.

Yesterday the Governor proclaimed a truce with the indian enemies for thirty days.

Extract from letter to Susanna Wright from Chas. Norris:

PHILADA April 19th. 1759.

. . . I cannot omit mentioning that when Genl Amherst was in Town, one Day his Brothr was drinking Tea with us when as a Curiosity they Silk Stockings was produced & my Brother taking notice that he seemed much pleased with them propos'd presenting them to the Genl, as the 1st. pr made here, the Eggs hatched, Balls wound, Silk twisted, & Stockings wove in the province of Pensilva, and on the occasion he express'd Surprise at the perfection of the first and declared he would not put them on Till he had the pleasure of waiting on His Majesty on his Return (if please God he sho'd live to see that day) when he did Protest he would display them to the full, and shd write Mists Amherst he was already fixed with Stockings for that occasion such as was not in her power to procure & drank the Lady's health who made them- So I am to take Issacs pr when done to honour my marriage with, if I shall live to that day. This is designed by Sa Bethell who proposes to set off homeward by way of Chester this morn'g.

C. N.

Refers to the famous silk manufacture carried on by her for many years.

A letter from Charles Norris to Susanna Wright, Philadelphia, 1761:

I mentioned yesterday that I had lost 3 volumes of Swifts works which were the three first volumes, and now on packing up the books find the 7th volume is missing which makes the set so lame that its much if thou'l find what most thou wanted to see- But wish it may be otherwise.

I have got Charles Moores Supply of Dodsley's Poems in 6 volumes and the 1st volume of the Rambler, the other if thou thinks it worth reading must be sent up hereafter, with many interruptions, have come near to the time appointed for the Waggons setting Oblige my conclusion.

I would try to fill up the box but am Interrupted & the Waggons will not stay.

Thy afs'd ffrd in Great Haste

CHAS. NORRIS.

A list of books found among the Wright papers shows the varied literature in which Susanna Wright delighted:

Sundry Books &c sent to Hempfield for Susanna Wright by Chas. Norris.

1	Vol.	Ansons Voyages	0		
1	"	Night Thoughts	0	6	
1	"	Miscellaneous Correspondence	0	6	
1	"	Plans of Pope's Gardens &c	0	0	
1	"	Pope's Essay on Man	0	0	
3	"	Pope's Letters	0	0	
2	"	Plymp Letters	0	8	0
3	"	Thompson's Seasons	0	15	0
7	"	Gentleman's Magazine, 1731, 32, 33, 34, 46, 47, & 1748	2	9	0
		7 Pamphlets Gentlemans Magazine, viz; Jan'y February March April May June & July Anno 1749	6	3	6
2	"	Cou. Philips Life &c	12	0	
		4 Numbers Do		17	0
		1 Pamphlet Suspicious Husband			
22	Vol.	11 Pamphlets pack'd in 4 boxes			

Another letter is written from Philadelphia without a date:

I had the pleasure of Receiving a few Lines from thee, and find my Sisters Principall, that where a man Dedicates his time to serve his Country and does yt faithfully & Cheerfully: Providence prospers his Labours, and gives him in ye Eastern Stile, an Increase of Corn, Wine, & Oyl, accordingly. Indeed when Jimmy was with us, in the Flesh we all told him not to make himself too uneasy abt his Hopps, for that did not doubt they wod be Got in & that in Good ordr tho he was obliged to be absent, & Debby added it might be a kind Providence to him, that He was here, as that might be a protection from a Violent fitt of the ffever this Fall.

I recd Twenty two pieces of Cherry tree Scantling by the Waggon when I also recd a lettr from Jemmy wherein he tells me his Intention of Going to Carlisle. We rejoiced in the Good Weathr they had for their Journey Please to tell Jemmy I did not pay the Cartage of the Scantling as he desired and admi P. Worrell does not comply with his word, as to my being disappointed in Coming up, need not say anything abt Reason &c.

I herewith send a Packet for my Brother to be left at yr house for him where I suppose he may meet it on his return.

Our Household Join in Tenders of Love & Respects To all yr Good Family & particular and all Susquehanna ffrds in General.

Please to accept the acknowledgements of Respect Regards & Tenders of Service from thy sincere and obliged ffriend

CHAS. NORRIS.

Susanna Wright presumably to Chas. Norris (probable date, 1763):

. . . We see by the paper of last week, the alarming situation your citty was in, first day in the afternoon, but that thro the great mercy of Providence no Damage, beyond terrifying the Inhabitants was the Consequence of that most tremendous phenomena of Nature, and every sensible mind must be affected in a proper manner, with the greatness of the mercy————we see also in the paper, the Genl Comotions and preparations for war, in Europe, and how nearly our Native Country seems to be threatened with being again Involved in it, and it further seems evident that if the hand of Providence will not sweep off a whole people at one Stroke, they Endure to destroy one another with all the dispatch they can.————But that article of 2 or 3 vessels being gone up St. Lawrence River with war-like Stores for the Indians, affects me a great deal; the strongest hopes we had under Providence of speedily seeing an end of their Ravages, was their want of Ammunition, But if that Article is fact, those hopes can have no foundation. I always dreaded having (that is having previously taken such measures as would of consequence render) all these savage Nations our Enemies, whenever we should have another french war, which could not rationally be expected at any great distance from us,————But what have I to do with politics,—If indeed any transactions in England, or in English America, merrit that name,————But you have a new Govr, the paper Informs us————As he is of the name & family of Penn if he would Condescend to search for, and tread in the foot steps of his Worthy Grandfather,

if By a long Course of years, and a long course of———— those footsteps are not so totally Obliterated, that they can never more be recovered, if he would act an upright & friendly part with such of the natives as could yet be found reclaimable, and Could by that means restore mutual Confidence and peace & safety to his Province, what a Blessed change would the poor frontier Inhabitants be favoured with,————we may at least pray for these things, and for peace, and May the father of Mercys Grant them to us. All our Relations, friends & neighbours, as far as I know, are favoured with health, Jemmy, his wife, & Sister affectionately Salute you all, you have our Kindest wishes respects and Compliments, which are desired to be delivered, Generally, & particularly, in town, at fairhill, & Somerville, ———but how are your pretty children,———the smallpox, spreads about us, and is very favourable, and we think we should be well satisfyd our little boy took it, yet we are Shockd whenever we apprehend any degre of the Infection is near him, yesterday a neighbour, whose children were lying in the distemper, came into the room where we were sitting at Dinner, as soon as Rhoda saw her enter, she picked up her boy, and carryd him off with the utmost precipitation, the woman sate down to dinner, but as soon as she was gone, the chair she had sate in, was taken out & set to air———Alas what poor timerous mortals we are, but such we are, and such we must be, and canot help it.—— I thot I had done, but I must add a few words about a fruit, or whatever you call it, that Jemmy has told us about, which when sliced & fried, is vulgarly called pork stake, he either did not hear, or forgot, the technical name of the plant or its produce, if it is propogated by seed, we must entreat you to send us some, if any other way,

pray advise us of it, and put us in the method of procuring wherewithal to get the precious animal plant into our garden, where at present we have nothing but mere vegetables——I have been very desirous for some years past, to endeavour by some means or other, to get some of the Myrtle wax plants brought up, and try if we could propogate them in any soyl we have, or could make, and added to what our garden already furnishes us with, if we could have something resembling animal food, and candles, I think I should be easy———as to Garden affirs.

John Penn was elected Governor of Penna. in 1763. Peace treaty in Paris concluded in 1763.

Susanna Wright to Chas. Norris:

Sept. 4, 1763.

I sit down this 4th. day of September with full purpose of heart to write a long letter so arm thyself with patience my good friend and read on. The first part of thy polite favour by Thomas Menshal would flatter my vanity very forcibly, if I had any vanity to be flattered,—but what—was that woman ever born, absolutely destitute of it—However mine is Sufficiently Indulgd in having such letters as these taken notice of in the obliging manner they are, and I want no other fine things, as what I have already rec'd are fine as may be.

I am thankful for the Books, I knew they would be high but I should not complain of the Price if one had a little more for their money, and I am of Messrs. the Reviewers mind, (who have given some extracts from them) that whoever reads these letters, must wish the number of them had been Greater. She is a Sprightly Easy writer, and lets us into the manners and customs of nations, very Imperfectly described by other travelers, But with much aquired Knowledge which could have been Procured by no smal degree of aplication, she seems to have been carryd away by the love of pleasure and no wonder in a Person of her lively turn; she was in the laughing time of life & from her high station & affluence had opportunitys of Indulging every temptation to it.

I see in a late magazin she dyed last year or the year before I d'ont recollect which as I have them for both years, and so much for Lady Montague, yet I seem sorry

after reading those Pretty letters she wrote to Pope that two Persons of such fine understanding should quarrel as they did, and Publish their quarrels to the World. Surely if I had a friend I could not Regard in that light any longer I would drop their acquaintance and say no ill of them;—after one Person has Publicly profesed the highest esteem for another it is a Poor Compliment to their own judgment to tell all mankind how unworthy their friend was of it—Both the admired writers are now no more and their Readers must follow them, and so on (as thou observes) to the end of the generations of men.

The next article of thy letter mentions a few Books you have of mine; surely thou could not Possibly Imagine anything I wrote about my own Careless nonsense had the most distant alusion to those which are safer than if they were in my own hands.

Thomas Menshal seems to say you exprest some doubt whether your Brother Really Recruited or not but that he did not grow worse,—in his weak state if he does not grow worse he must certainly Grow Better at least such are our hopes & earnest desires. Pray Remember us Kindly & Respectfully to him, and to the Good family at fairhil & Sumerville.—It is with pleasure we observe the old Gentleman your Daddy Remembers & thinks so kindly of us as to intend us the favour of a visit, if he shal be able to Perform the journey, I am certain all sides will be highly Pleased, Provided we shal be able to Persuade him to stay with us till he shal have recovered the fatigue of it.

Susanna Wright to Chas. Norris:

From a Principle of Self love I have a great Deference for advanced age, and every now & then I am thinking thou are too young to be a Correspondent, and I wonder at the Patience—but I seem to be growing younger myself than I have been for some months Past as Jemmy continues recovering his former health very fast, and is sometimes whole days without any return of that tedious Pain in his side tho he feels it occasionally after riding or any fatigue. I Believe the Soap he took was of Singular Advantage to him tho he has taken none for some time. We are Obliged to our Kind friends both the Doctrs Moore, and Jemmy will I hope in a few weeks be able to Acknowledge in Person both thy Good Offices & theirs.

How dare I say this when I reflect I have lately entered my sixty-seventh year and very sensibly feel the effects Length of Days necessarily Produce; What I mean is that the Goodness of divine Providence has removed a great weight from my spirits by indulgently permitting my brother's recovery beyond what I had hoped.

Thous art Pleased to give me notice of thy Self thy Son & daughter's journeying to Chester and an agreeable jaunt I dare say it was with their Pretty Prattle; Our judgments may be informed by the wise sayings & elaborate discourse of Riper years, but these dawnings of understanding are like the chearful dawn of a fine morning, like the first gay appearance of Spring, like something that affords a pleasure not to be described—Johnny Lowdon had put yokes upon some little pigs yesterday and this morning they came very abruptly to our Door, Jemmy expresd no small degree

of anger at it, when our little boy said very good umourdly um comes here daddy, only to show how fine um is, this paliation occasioned the poor Pigs to be dismissed with more temper than they would otherways have been,—from Pigs I could naturally make a transition to rabbits, and tell a story that would not be so unentertaining to Isaac & Debby, if I was where they are, as now about 5 months ago. The Dogs chased a Doe Rabbit from her nest in the meadow before our door, and left 6 little orphans a few days old, now in Pure Compassion we took them in, fed them with milk, weand them, and that now they are the Prettyest tame Pets Imaginable, as Clean & Inofencive as English Rabbits are the Contrary, stand up on their hind legs when they are called, and eat our little boys bread & fruit out of his hand, lye down to be Patted & stroakd—and are Purposed to become in due time, the Progenitors of a numerous & flourishing family. But I perceive my letter is already Become too childish for even Infancy itself to Read, if Infancy could read a letter, so from Pigs & Rabbits I'le ascend—no, I will Descend, to Politics & Popular comotion—our Back countys are in great agitation, Preparatory to the Ensuing Election, one day last week, not fewer than 40 ministers & Elders, deputed from their Respective congregations, (some from your Citty) with several hundred of their Adherents, asesmbled in Lancaster, what they did there I cannot say, only made long speeches, from thence a part or the whole of the Principals, Proceeded to York & Carlisle, all other Societys are Prodigiously Alarmd, some say they will carry all before them, some say they will be able to Do very little————I wish they may not take it into their heads, to meet and that no Inocent People may be endangered, the leading men of every sect who wish

to oppose them, teeze Jemmy Perpetualy to let his name be made use of, which he prudently & absolutely Refuses—some friends in Particular are very earnest with him, if he could really do the Society any service, he would hold it his duty to do it, and would Comply without hesitation, but as he is very sure he canot, on the present occasion, he can be under no tye to oblige them, merely for the sake of obliging them, who have so disgracefully & without any reason discarded him from their community——— the truth is, they are at a loss for a man who they have reason to believe has the same Interest in the County that he has—But let them try their Possibles without him, he Purposes to be with you at the day of Determination—I wonder if thy wife is returned from Chester—wherever she is, she has our affectionate Remembrances & Best wishes, so has thy sister, so has thy children, so has thyself, from Jemmy in Particular—for all this is such a long & foolish letter, I am sitting on thorns all the while I write it, what must thou sit upon to read it, I ought to be spinning twine to sow drying cloths—to which I now return—a more Justifyable Employmnt than writing tryfles & nonsense for all which I beg thy excuse and am etc.—

A fragment of a letter written by Susanna to Charles Norris is dated Nov. 26., 1764. The subject of it is her nephew Jemmy, one of the children she had brought up for her brother James, whose wife died early in life.

"As to Jemmy's journeying to Phila, and having his spirits Roused by public business, I am so fortunate to think just as thou does, no smal complimt to my own Judgmnt, but the engaging company he will meet with there, has great weight with me, in the Salutary Effects of these Journeys.—which how he will be able to perform, is yet a secret to us; his own riding horse can travel no longer, and to Go in his Carriage, he alledges would slide him into a libel; —I propose that he should engage the two York members, and James Webb, Intimate acquaintance, though of different sentiments in politics, to accept seats in the same vehicle, and see who will be hardy Enough to libel a whole waggon load of Assembly men."

The risk which the settlers at Columbia were in during the agitation with the Indians, caused some anxiety to their friends in Phila.

To Susanna Wright from Sally Armitt:

PHILADELPHIA November ye 8 1755.

Dear Susy:

It is . . . . . to express the uneasiness that I am under on Account of your Family, I wish you would come to town, as it must be more dangerous on the river, dear Susy we have Several Spare rooms which you shall be very welcome to and we shall take it as a favour, I know the would not chuse to be in a Family where the could not make free, dear Susy the shall be as if at home in our House, but if you chuse not to be with your Friends, and would take a house, we have a great deal of new furniture that was made before my daddy dyed, which you shall be exceeding welcome to while you are in town, many of the people in town are much frightened and Some think nothing about it, dear Susy Please to give my love to all your Family, I conclude with my sincerest wishes for the Health and happiness of your kind Family, and am dear Susy thy

very affectionate Friend

SALLY ARMITT.

That hospitable invitation was not accepted for the Wright family remained at Hempfield throughout the trouble.

Charles Thomson, of our first Congress, was actively interested in Indian affairs, from 1755 to 58, and the following letters were written by him to Susanna Wright.

Addressed to Susannah Wright at Hempfield:

PHILADA July 21th. 1755

I was disappointed of writing to you by the Post last time, by his setting out some Hours sooner than usual. But as I had a Letter ready, I sent it by a Waggoner & I hope it got safe to your hands. The Indians are all gone out of Town. The two Alleghenians expressed a great desire that some white Man should go with them. By that they said their People would be convinced of the sincerity of the English of their willingness to be at Peace with them & if once they were convinced of this, they said they were sure they would all withdraw from the French, deliver our Prisoners & their young Men would join with us. This was not said in public but private. The Moravian who went with me before offered to go but he wanted a Companion. As I was greatly concerned for the poor Captives & had good assurance there were upwards of 200 in one Town which might be delivered up at once, I offered my service, not doubting at this critical time of being instrumental towards bringing home the Captives, & perhaps some farther service to my Country. However the Gov & Council taking my life in Consideration were of opinion I should not be permitted to go for fear it seems I should mention something to the Indian of Land Affairs. They are conscious of Guilt and afraid of an Enquiry. Notwithstanding the Danger & fatigue I should have been satisfied to have gone, but as they have prevented me I am content. And having ever found as kind a Providence in what I might deem disappointments, as when things succeeded to my wish I rest satisfied that whatever is, either is, or will

be ordered by the best.—The Moravian is gone. We have been greatly distracted this week with various Accounts from the Army before Ticonderoga. Every Day we had some blind acc'ts & every day our hopes & fears variously raised. The most certain accounts you have in this Days Paper.— It appears that the ill success of the army was occasioned by their too great eagerness as they attacked the Lines sword in hand, without waiting for the Cannon or making any regular approaches. The Highland Regiment called the Highland Watch, three times mounted the Lines and made great Havoc among the French but not being supported they were as often drove back. This it is said has been the most severely handled, some acc'ts mention their having lost 7 of their officers & a no. wounded. The same acc'ts mention the Death of several French namely Col: Lieut. Majors and particularly Major Rutherfòrd and Major Tulehin & Lieut & Col Shaw of the Jersey Regiment. Next week's Post will we expect bring more certain accounts and we hope more agreeable News, as it is said the Army intends again to return to the attack.—I have said nothing of the Business of ———— as it is in my last letter. I long to hear how everything goes on to the Westward. I expected some news from my friend John Wright on his return from Carlyle, but he has forgot to write. My love & Compliments to all Friends, I am with Esteem

yr. affectionate Friend

CHAS. THOMSON.

Charles Thomson to Susanna Wright:

24 Aug. 1758.

As you have heard of the Reduction of Luisburg I have nothing new to inform you, but that as usual we celebrated it with tumultous Joy. Some got drunk to show their Loyalty & others out of great Zeal to their country burned the &K of France in Effigy, & then wreaked their Fury on the Houses & Windows of the neighborhood not illuminated. Some have sustained a good deal of damage But a number of the more sober Inhabitants getting together with the Mayor & Recorder at their head suppressed the Mob. There is some talk that 4000 of the Troops employed in the Siege are burning to join Abercrombie with intention to make a second attempt. But whether this may be depended upon or whether people report it because they wish it, I will not say. Last night it was whispered that Gen. Forbes was dead: considering his Indisposition most seemed to think his Death wd be no hurt to the Camp. This day I was informed at the Coffee House by Mr. Howell, that the Genl complained much of the Waggons contracted for; & looked on himself as much imposed on: for which Reason he had issued out Orders to contract with People to carry Provisions to Rays town at so much a hundred; & ordered that as soon as they arrived there they shd be paid; & that if any Damage was sustained from the Enemy that the Loss shd be made up at the Expense of the Crown. There must be some fault: or certainly they'd be in no want of Waggons. The news from

Europe might give you great Joy. It is to be hoped the British Lyon will rouse at last and that our private Expeditions ..... of our Enemies.

The Loss of so many of this shipping must be a great stroke to the French who are aiming at being a Maritime Power. May an honourable peace crown this.....

I hope to hear of the perfect Recovery of your family.

I am with the highest Esteem

yr sincere & obliged Frd.

CHAS THOMSON.

Addressed to Mrs. Susanna Wright at Hempfield:

PHILADA. Sep. 26. 1758.

At length the Campaign to the Westward is begun: I hope it will not end so. This first stroke is a little unfortunate. But our troops I find are no wise disheartened They breathe nothing but Revenge and are eager to be led on, so that it will be the fault of the Genl. if they do not proceed. By the acc'ts. I have had from my friend at Rays Town I find there were in the Detachment 753 private men & 37 Officers, of the latter 21 are missing & 2 wounded. Of the privates 439 are returned safe, 36 wounded and 278 missing. The Highlanders suffered most one half of them missing or wounded.

"The action was in the clear ground close by the Fort The Enemy were fully apprized of our Detachment's approach & of its Strength & during the Action frequently called on Major Grant by name, it is said by some that Major Grant is taken prisoner." You will see more of it in the paper so that it wd. be needless to enlarge. The treaty is not yet begun but we expect it will next week. If you do not hear from me by next Post, you may conclude for certain I am gone to Boston. I am apprehensive we shal have some Confusion there. Peters is gone up. Croghan & We have ben there for some time. We know the Men & consequently cannot doubt but that they will do what in them lies to promote certain Ends.

The Change agst the Prop. of fraud & forgery sticks in their stomach & they want if possible to wash it away but I

fancy they will succeed no better than in their late attempt to wash the Black Moore white.

I should have been glad to have heard of the Recovery of all my friends, but I suppose you are busy. When the hurry is over I shall beg the Continuance of your..... Should I be gone to Easton, they will be conveyed to the.... & if I can find I shall endeavour to write to you.....My Love & Respects to all Friends.

I am

your sincere & obliged Friend.

Addressed on back. No date.

(For Susanna Wright these, with love.)

These Books etc. I send, with love, to my esteemed Friend and with affectionate desires that the great preserver of men, the benficient father of Mankind may in this season, not only of feebleness on all & of age but also of confusion & perplexity be thy support & comfort. May the Offspring of our beloved friends, by joining in with the calls of grace become effectually sensible of the emptiness & vanity of those ideas of greatness & happiness, those pleasures & enjoyments which in this state of probation so strongly attract the human mind. And may be timely sensible that in the conclusion of their days, be they few or many, nothing can afford them any solid, satisfaction but the consciousness of having, to the best of their ability, done their duty, and in the hopes of a better life. With sincere affection to the welminded among you, of every name & class, I remain thy friend, Anthony Benezet. *

To Susanna Wright.

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* Anthony Benezet, a philanthropist, was born in France in 1713; died at Philadelphia, 1784.

Surrounded by an affectionate group of nephews and nieces and their children, Susanna Wright spent the evening of her long life at Columbia. One birthday, a few years before she died, she penned a sort of family narrative in verse, which is, unfortunately, so much torn and defaced by time that only a line or two, here and there, can be deciphered. One complete verse is left, however, and is valuable evidence of her undaunted faith and serenity of mind as the shadows fell about her.

Rest then my soul: in these appointments rest:
  and down the steep of age pursue thy way;
with humble hope, and faith unfailing bless'd
  the mortal, shall surpass the natal day.